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FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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FOREWORD

Purpose

When the Secretarial Training Program was inaugurated by the Federal Extension Service, there were frequent requests from State Extension Services for assistance in the preparation of a reference manual or handbook for State and County office secretaries. The primary purpose of a handbook is to provide the secretary with information and suggestions on methods to be followed in carrying out her duties. It is also useful (1) in training newly employed secretaries to insure explanation of the areas with which they need to be familiar, and (2) as a reference manual for temporary employees in the event of a secretary's extended absence for such reasons as illness or vacation.

This guide was developed to assist State staff members in preparing a handbook for State and County Extension secretaries. Much of the information for the completed handbook must be prepared within the State so as to conform to local policies, requirements, and regulations. However, some chapters have been written in detail because the principles are applicable to the job of the Extension secretary, no matter what her geographical location.

Preparation and Distribution

Using a standard loose leaf format has the advantages of facilitating (1) addition at appropriate places of information or instructions which the secretary determines are applicable to her specific job, and (2) preparation and distribution of corrected pages or chapters when revisions are necessary.

Because development and distribution of the material is of particular importance, suggestions follow for:

1. Preparation

a. Appoint a committee, designating members to draft specific sections. Assigning selected secretaries to serve on the committee provides for utilization of their ideas and experience as to the information

which should be included. Some County secretaries have maintained reference files over the years which afford ready-made resource material.

b. Prepare and distribute chapters at periodic intervals which has the twofold advantage of giving the State staff time to write the material and the secretarial staff time to study it more thoroughly when it is received in smaller quantities.

2. Distribution

- a. Distribute the handbook as a training aid during secretarial training conferences, or
- b. Distribute and discuss the handbook in conferences with County personnel. This suggestion is particularly applicable to those States whose District Supervisory staff members meet periodically with agents and secretaries, either at District Conference or at individual County offices.
- c. Distribute the handbook to County staffs with the suggestion that it be used as training material during regular office conferences. This may have most value in larger County offices where portions of staff conferences could be devoted to a thorough review of the handbook sections to insure understanding by all personnel.

Content

1. Cover

The cover of this guide was prepared with the intention of providing States with a design which can be adapted for their use.

2. Foreword

Pay tribute to the Extension secretary and recognize the significance of her position. A letter or message from the Extension Director could serve the dual purpose of briefly explaining the manual's purpose and content as well as emphasizing the secretary's importance as a member of the Extension team.

3. Table of Contents

List the topics covered in each chapter. It is optional, but helpful, if a detailed index is provided at the end. However, such an index requires verification each time any revision is made.

4. Chapters

The chapters numbered I, II, VI, VIII, VIII, IX, X, and XII outline items to be developed in detail if they are applicable in the particular State. Many State Administrative Handbooks contain the information needed for these chapters. It is perhaps most desirable for it to be repeated so that the secretary's reference is complete; however, if this does not appear practicable, notations as to specific locations of pertinent data should be a part of the secretary's handbook.

In those States where policies vary among Counties, space may be allowed for the individual County to complete details. The description of the item and suggestions for its completion could be printed on paper of a different color as a means of identifying it for the County's attention.

Chapters III, IV, V, XI, and XIII are written in more detail and may be used in this form or adapted to meet the State's needs. Some of these chapters are a combination of the two; for example, at the beginning of Chapter IV, Correspondence, the Penalty Mailing Privilege section should be covered in more detail or mentioned briefly and reference made to another publication, such as, a State Administrative Handbook or the bulletin "Use of Federal Penalty Mailing Privilege by Extension Employees." The latter is suggested as an exhibit in the handbook for secretaries.

5. Exhibits

If the State wishes to add items suggested in the list, they may be referred to in the text by using the statement "See Exhibit " at the appropriate place. Samples of completed forms shown as exhibits should indicate correct preparation of various documents, as well as information on the required number and distribution of copies and due date, if applicable.

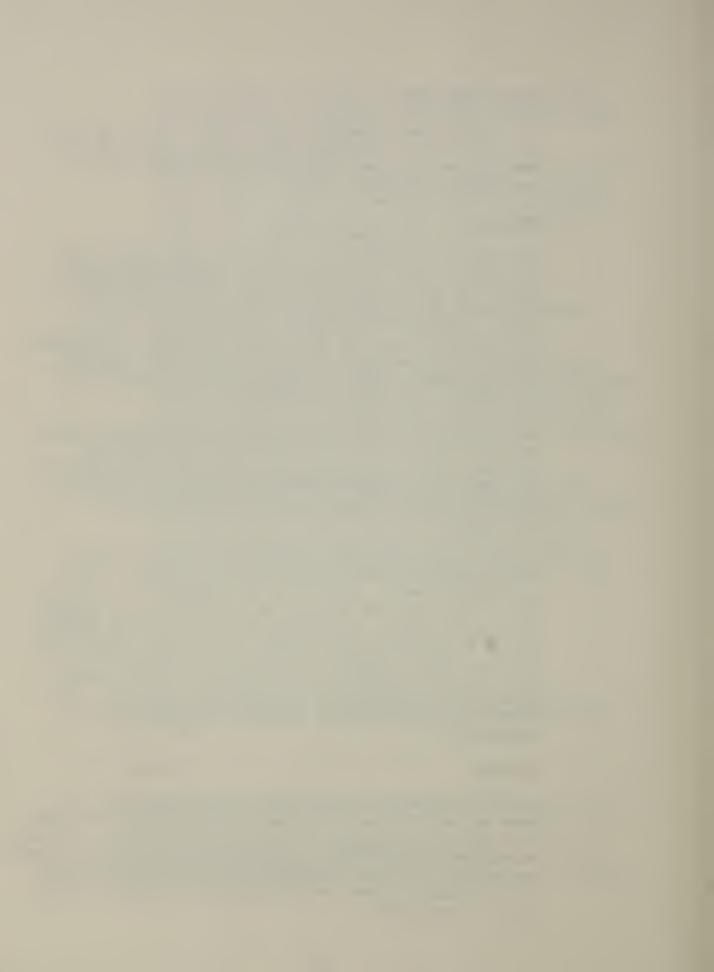


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CHAPTER I

THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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Legislative Authorization

Smith-Lever Act
Memorandum of Understanding
State and County Laws
Financing

Federal Extension Service

Functions and Responsibilities

State Extension Service

Growth and Development Objectives Program Relationships with Government Agencies and Organizations

County Extension Service

Organization and Administration Management Operations

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State Map

Districts, Counties, Location of County Offices

Staff Members

Lists of State and County Personnel
Name
Location
Telephone Number

CHAPTER II

PERSONNEL POLICIES

Employment Policies

Recruitment and Selection Salary Performance Appraisal Promotion Resignation

Hours of Work

Regular Hours Lunch Periods Coffee Breaks

Leave and Holidays

Annual Leave

Amount Earned Vacation Arrangements

Sick Leave

Amount Earned

Rules Governing Taking Sick Leave

Maternity Leave

Compensatory Leave

Jury Leave

Leave without Pay

Authorized Holidays

List those observed by the University for reference purposes

Fringe Benefits

Insurance

Hospitalization

Life

Retirement

Workmen's Compensation

CHAPTER III

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Telephone

Courtesy in handling telephone calls is of prime importance in an Extension office. In telephone conversations the secretary must rely entirely on selection of words. It is not like face-to-face conversations where she can use visual media to express ideas. Diction is more important on the telephone than in any other speaking situation. The well-modulated voice carries best. Poor enunciation and careless articulation, helped along by mouth obstructions, such as, pencils, cigarettes, and chewing gum, make it necessary to repeat statements which might otherwise be misunderstood.

Giving the caller undivided attention and making notes eliminate much of his having to repeat messages or questions. It is important, too, not to seem hurried. The person on the other end of the line cannot see the work piled up on your desk, nor does he know your phone has been ringing constantly. He can judge you only by the way you sound. Making notes about the business to be transacted before placing calls avoids delays, omissions, and embarrassing call backs.

Every call is different. Problems demand an immediate and correct response, and secretaries are called upon to use initiative with every new situation. Being courteous, attentive, friendly, considerate, and patient help to make the caller pleased with the manner in which he is being treated.

"Telephone as you would be telephoned to"

When your telephone rings:

Answer promptly--try to answer before the second ring.

Identify yourself when answering--"County Extension Office, Miss Jones speaking." (Or use other appropriate identification.)

Speak distinctly and pleasantly--lips should be half an inch from the mouthpiece. "Keep a smile in your voice."

Request identity of caller, when necessary, in a tactful manner--"May I tell him who is calling?" is far better than "Who's calling?"

Volunteer your own assistance--"May I help you?" Have reference material at hand.

Explain waits--when you leave your desk to get information, tell the caller how long it will be or offer to call back.

Take messages willingly--write messages on appropriate form and deliver promptly. Messages must be accurate and complete (date, time, name and telephone number of caller, exact message, information furnished, etc.).

Avoid abrupt phrases--instead of "He's out" or "He's busy," say, "Mr. Smith is out of the office right now. I expect him to return about three o'clock; may I ask him to call you?"

Refer calls elsewhere only when you know <u>definitely</u> the correct person--if you are not sure, offer to find out the information and call the person back.

Keep record of phone calls--insert carbon in telephone message pad or use some appropriate means of recording call for reports and/or follow-up.

Hang up gently--end call with "thank you" or "goodbye."

Plan conversations before placing outgoing calls--make notes indicating the information you wish to give or receive.

Set up a desk telephone list--keep frequently called numbers readily available.

Office Caller

Greet callers immediately—even when a secretary is talking on the telephone or with another visitor, it is possible to acknowledge a caller with a nod and a smile.

Determine the purpose of the visit--the use of "May I help you?" to a person who has no appointment, or one who comes

in when the agent is not there, provides the visitor with an opportunity to ask questions of the secretary who may be able to answer them or refer the inquiry to another agent.

Be considerate of a visitor who has to wait--show him where to place his coat, hat, or other articles; have appropriate reading matter available.

Get the visitor's name right--genuine interest and undivided attention help fix the caller's name in the secretary's mind.

Be cordial and helpful—but avoid encouraging lengthy conversations; excuse yourself and return to the work at hand with a brief explanation.

Schedule appointments for short, definite periods--list them on your calendar and the agent's. Be sure to make changes when required.

Obtain information, such as, telephone number, address, etc. -- this is helpful in the event an appointment has to be postponed or canceled.

Call the agent's attention to appointments each day--provide him with correspondence or reference material he may need before the visitor is expected.

If a visitor should overstay his appointment, use the telephone, intercommunication system, or give the agent a note to remind him of other duties or appointments. Remember, most agents have personal preferences on procedures to be followed in receiving visitors and furnishing information to them. It is necessary, therefore, for the secretary to have a clear understanding as to the agent's wishes in order to avoid assuming too much responsibility. Generally, agents appreciate the secretary's assistance in taking care of routine matters, but she first has to earn a reputation for courtesy and service by using tact and judgment and by becoming thoroughly familiar with the Extension program.

Furnishing Information in the Agent's Absence

Understanding and following the agent's preferences will also provide a basis for procedures on answering inquiries in the agent's absence. If, for example, he wishes you to furnish information, other than that of a technical subject matter

nature, be positive of its accuracy. A record of such callers' names, addresses, nature of requests, and information given will provide the agent with a summary for any follow-up action, as well as for monthly report statistics.

Personal Appearance

Appropriate business attire consists of simple, clean, well-pressed garments. Realizing that others will evaluate you on the basis of your appearance, it makes good sense to carefully watch your habits of grooming and dress. Take advantage of the hints on posture, diet, clothes, jewelry combinations, and other such tips that are readily available in magazines and newspapers. Spick-and-span grooming and careful selection of appropriate office apparel are proof of your good taste and judgment.

Office Appearance

The secretary should do everything possible to make the office a pleasant place for those who work in it and for visitors. Most secretaries make a point of arriving at the office a few minutes early in the morning to open windows, turn on lights, and dust desks. Arranging materials on the agent's desk in order of their importance will be helpful in calling attention to the work that needs to be taken care of first. Checking your calendar and the agent's, replenishing desk supplies, such as, scratch pads and paper clips, and sharpening pencils imply willingness to cooperate in performing the small tasks which make the more important ones easier for everyone.

Some jobs require that papers be spread all over your desk. However, the usual practice is to finish one task before you begin another and to put away that job before taking out all the papers and equipment for the next one. In addition to keeping your own work station neat, do what you can to keep the office in order. When folders are taken from the files, return them to their proper places; do not stack material on top of file cabinets, on window sills, or tables. Neat arrangement of bulletins and supplies in storage cabinets simplifies location of the items and facilitates reordering.

Loyalty

Loyalty to the Extension Service and to the agents makes for a smooth-running organization. When an agent knows that the secretary can be trusted with information, facts, and figures,

he can give more time to getting the work done and less time to details. The word "secret" in secretary is meant to convey a most important phase of the job, that is, refraining from gossip and from divulging any information about co-workers.

Never expose the agent to unfavorable comment or criticism. No worthwhile purpose ever is served by spreading gossip or rumors, either about the organization or your individual co-workers. No office always runs smoothly, but there are certain things expected of you at all times. It is sometimes easy to become annoyed and convey your dissatisfaction to others. Nevertheless, you are a member of a team and your co-workers have every right to expect absolute loyalty. If you have constructive criticisms, discuss them with the agent.

CHAPTER IV

CORRESPONDENCE

Penalty Mailing Privilege

Restrictions on use
Use of enclosure slips
Ordering penalty envelopes
Ordering (or printing) letterhead
Signature by secretary
Quarterly reports

Mailing Lists

Keeping Up To Date

Up-to-date mailing lists are an important asset to the Extension office. Because of changes, deletions, and additions, it may prove more efficient to maintain card files rather than typewritten lists. Keeping the information current by making revisions as they occur helps to speed regular mailings and prevents addressing envelopes incorrectly which, in turn, results in delayed and/or returned letters.

Distribution of Mailing Lists

/Include under this heading regulations and policies regarding the furnishing of mailing lists to persons, firms, and associations.

Incoming Mail

Good management principles suggest that the mail be opened, sorted, and distributed by the secretary. Letters marked "personal" or "confidential" should not be opened unless you have been instructed to do so by the agent.

Knowing the time that mail is delivered to the office or picked up at the post office helps in planning for the everyday job of handling the mail. Here are some suggestions for a systematic procedure to be used in processing incoming mail:

- Sort the envelopes according to their importance: special delivery, airmail, first-class letters, bills and statements, advertisements and circulars, newspapers and periodicals.
- 2. Open all envelopes, then remove contents, making sure that all enclosures are there. If not, make a notation on the letter.
- 3. Attach enclosures to the letter. If the name and address of the writer are not on the letter, attach the envelope. (Do not discard envelopes until you are sure there is no possibility of mishap.)
- 4. Sort mail in the order of its importance, with that requiring immediate action on top. Attach any previous correspondence or information which will be helpful in preparing replies before placing the mail in the proper place on the agent's desk.

Outgoing Mail

As the incoming mail is placed on the agent's desk, collect the outgoing mail and/or the material ready to be filed. Check each letter to be sure (1) it is signed; (2) inside address and envelope address are the same; and (3) all enclosures are included. Have the outgoing mail ready to coincide with the schedule for pickup at the office or delivery to the post office.

Answering and Acknowledging Mail

Depending on the agent's preference, the secretary may prepare for his signature answers to routine letters, such as, requests for circular letters, bulletins, and dates of meetings. In many cases an agent will appreciate your acknowledging correspondence received in his absence from the office to let the writer know that action on his letter will be taken when the agent returns. Indicate in your acknowledgment when a reply might be expected.

Letters

Style of Letters

The Extension Service does not require that a particular style of letter be followed; however, the Block Style is preferred.

Date Line

The placement of the date line is determined by the length of the letter, generally two to four spaces below the last line of the letterhead, either centered or flush with the right-hand margin.

Inside Address

The inside address is blocked at the left-hand margin. The exact position depends on the length of the letter, generally not less then two nor more than twelve spaces below the date line.

Attention Line

If this is used, it should be typed two spaces below the address. The word "of" is not necessary. The attention line has no punctuation and is not underscored. When a letter is addressed to a firm and has an attention line, the salutation is "Gentlemen" because the salutation is to a firm, not an individual.

Salutation

Type the salutation two spaces below the inside address, flush with the left-hand margin. If an attention line is used, type the salutation two spaces below the attention line.

Body of the Letter

Single space the letter unless it is very short; double space between paragraphs. Begin each line at the left-hand margin except when a letter is double-spaced in which case paragraphs should be indented.

Letter of More Than One Page

When dividing a paragraph, have at least two lines of the paragraph on the first page and not less than three lines to carry over to the next page. Never divide a word at the end of a page. It is best not to divide a word at the end of a line, and never divide the last word in a paragraph. On second and subsequent page headings, using a plain sheet, write the name of the addressee, page number, and date. Type the notation about one inch from the top of the page, and continue the letter two to four spaces below this heading.

Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is typed two spaces below the last line of the letter and slightly to the right of the center of the page. Capitalize only the first word and follow the complimentary close with a comma. The dictator's name is typed four lines below the complimentary close with his title directly beneath. If you write an official letter under your signature, the preferred style is:

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Mary G. Jones Secretary to Mr. Smith

The important thing to remember, however, when using your own name, is that under no circumstances can you mail such matter under the penalty privilege. A stamped envelope must be used. Another important item for the secretary to remember is never to initial letters sent out under the penalty privilege. The phrase, "Dictated but not read," should never be used by an Extension secretary.

Identification Line

Type your initials on the line directly underneath the last line of the signature (title of the dictator), flush with the left-hand margin. Since the name of the dictator is typed in the signature, there is no need to type his initials in the identification line.

When a person who signed the letter has not dictated it, show the name of the actual dictator on the carbon file copy (not on the original). This would be placed either above or below the secretary's initials.

When a letter is composed by the secretary for the agent's signature, the secretary's initials should be enclosed in parentheses.

Enclosure Notation

When a letter contains enclosures, type the word "Enclosure" or "Enclosures" at the left-hand margin one or two spaces

beneath the identification line. If there is more than one enclosure, indicate the number. If the titles of the enclosures are not mentioned in the body of the letter, list them on the carbon copies to provide a record of what was sent.

Carbon Copy Distribution Notation

When a carbon copy is to be sent to another person, type the distribution notation flush with the left-hand margin, one or two spaces below all other notations.

Include under this heading any special instructions or policies on furnishing copies of correspondence to State office personnel or others.

Suggestion: Make an extra copy of every letter and piece of typewritten material, preferably on paper of a different color, in addition to the regular file copy. These copies can be maintained in a separate folder in chronological order and are useful in preparing reports, providing a cross reference, and also serving as guides for replies to correspondence that the secretary may be able to handle.

Appearance of Correspondence

To assist you in planning margins, observe how much space material of different lengths requires in your notebook. A well-planned letter can be spoiled by poor placement, untidy erasures, and typographical errors.

Set up your work so that the margins, top and bottom and on both sides, form a balanced arrangement. Be sure to change your typewriter ribbon before it becomes worn and faint. Erasures should be neat and practically invisible. Any corrections made on the original should also be made on carbon copies. (Don't erase the original only, then retype, leaving the copies a jumble of strikeovers!)

Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and division of words are the secretary's responsibility, just as you should insure that everything is letter-perfect. Proofreading your material before it is removed from the typewriter saves having to realign it in the machine; also the work is then ready immediately for approval or signature.

News Releases

Through press, radio, and television releases the general public receives information concerning the Extension program.

Generally, a news release is typed on white bond paper, double-spaced, with paragraphs indented five spaces. The upper left-hand side of the paper should contain name and address of the Extension office and the name and telephone number of the person responsible for the release. On the right-hand side should be the words "For immediate release" or "For release on (give date)."

This provides general information but you should check with the agent on the details of format required by news media in your County. However, proofreading is especially important; here is a brief checklist of errors to look for:

Spelling
Punctuation
Transposition of lines
Inconsistencies in capitalization
Paragraph indentations and spacing
Accuracy of date, day of week, and time mentioned in connection with scheduled meetings and events.

Reminder Systems

Follow-up systems are described in a variety of terms: reminders, tickler files, future files, follow-up files, etc. The particular name is not significant, but it is important that whatever system is used be checked daily.

Reminders relate to such recurring items as:

Regularly scheduled conferences
Telephone and office calls received when the agent is out
Correspondence requiring some further action
Report deadline dates
News release deadlines
Meeting dates--local, State, national
Ordering supplies

Daily, monthly, and annual calendars keep you and the agent posted on commitments and are convenient for entering daily appointments as well as recurring events. A follow-up file may also be used by setting up either 3x5 guides or regular file folders. In either case you will need 12 guides or folders, each labeled with the name of a month; 31 guides or folders labeled 1 through 31, one for each day of the month; and a guide or folder for future years. On the first of any month the daily guides will be in order in the front followed by the monthly guides in order, beginning with the one for the ensuing month.

Items for reminder use are written on a card or slip of paper and placed behind the daily guide for the correct date if the date comes in the current month, or behind the appropriate monthly guide if the date comes later. Each morning the guide for the day will be transferred to its proper place behind the guide for the next month, thus exposing the reminder slips for the day. By the end of the month all the daily guides will have been collected behind the guide for the ensuing month. On the first of the month the monthly guide for the new month is placed at the back of the file, thus bringing to attention the slips that have been collected for the new month. These slips are then distributed behind the proper daily guides for the month.

CHAPTER V

INFORMATION ON DUPLICATING

Mimeograph Process

Briefly, the mimeograph process has four elements: stencil, ink, paper, and the mimeograph. The stencil is attached to the outside of the cylinder and paper is fed between the cylinder and the impression roller of the mimeograph. As the roller rises automatically and causes the paper to touch the stencil, ink flows from the inside of the cylinder through the pad and then through the stencil and produces copy on the paper.

Stencil sheets are available in letter and legal lengths, in various colors, with and without film, etc. There is a wide choice of inks, ranging from paste to various fluid inks. Colored inks are as easy to use as the standard black inks. An extra cylinder can be interchanged with the cylinder containing black ink. Many types and colors of paper can be used to gain attention.

Preparation for Typing Stencils

When typing stencils, it is important to follow the specific instructions which come with the particular brand of stencil you are using. A stencil properly prepared can be used to print as many as 5,000 copies.

Cutting a stencil involves no more work than ordinary typing, except for arranging the material so that it falls in the center of the stencil and does not extend beyond the marginal lines indicated. Set up on ordinary paper the material as you want it to appear on the stencil. Checking your copy for accuracy of form and typing will prevent improper word division, poor placement, spacing errors, and other costly mistakes. Place the typed draft between the stencil and backing so that its top edge falls under the line marked "Top Edge Paper Guide" on the stencil. Place small dots of correction fluid at the starting points of date, address, paragraphs, etc. These dots will serve as guide marks and will not affect the stencil.

Always clean the typewriter keys with a stiff bristle brush before cutting a stencil. Even though you use the plastic film on top of

the stencil when you type, the initial cleaning of the keys is very important. This film, however, will make cleaning the type unnecessary throughout the remainder of the job.

Disengage the ribbon by switching the lever or button to the stencil position.

Place the cushion sheet, glossy side up if waxed, between the stencil sheet and the cardboard backing. This soft sheet receives the type key impressions and prevents cutting out letters. It can be used several times if necessary. For easier proofreading, a piece of carbon paper may be inserted between the cushion sheet and the backing. If a file copy is to be made, insert a carbon and tissue between the cushion sheet and the backing.

To avoid wrinkling, the loose ends of the film, stencil sheet, cushion sheet, carbon paper, and backing sheet should be held together and inserted in the typewriter with the backing sheet next to the typewriter platen.

Type evenly with sharp staccato touch, using greater force for characters having large printing surfaces, such as, M and W, and less force for those with smaller printing surfaces, such as, c, o, and punctuation marks. The tension setting is important and the secretary should remember to adjust the typewriter setting to the indicator which will give the best copy.

Making Corrections on the Stencil

If you make an error, never strike over--use the stencil correction fluid. Apply a thin, but complete, coating of correction fluid with the brush over each character to be corrected, using vertical strokes of the brush. When the fluid is dry, retype with a lighter than normal touch. If film is attached to the stencil, lift film, apply correction fluid, let dry, and re-lay the film.

Removing Stencil from Typewriter

To remove the stencil from the typewriter, release the paper release lever and slowly roll it out of the machine to avoid creasing or wrinkling and to prevent lines or marks on the duplicated copies.

Proofreading

If a carbon has been inserted, the material stenciled can be easily proofread from the backing sheet. No exception should be made to

the practice of proofreading all work before placing the stencil on the duplicator for running off copies.

Signatures

Remove the cushion sheet and place a writing plate between the stencil sheet and backing. To avoid cutting through the stencil when a film is not used, place a piece of cellophane or tissue paper over the part of the stencil to be signed.

To correct a signature, smooth over the error by rubbing it lightly, with a glass or plastic rod or paper clip, in a circular motion. Raise the stencil from the writing or signature plate, apply a thin coating of correction fluid over the error, and allow to dry. Place stencil back on the plate and make the correction, using light pressure with the stylus.

Filing Stencils

If the stencil is to be saved for future use, it should be cleaned first. Remove ink from the stencil by blotting with absorbent paper or newspaper or, if fast-drying ink has been used, the stencil must be washed with cold water. File the stencil between clean sheets of paper or in regular mimeograph filing wrappers that are available and fasten to it a copy of the finished material for easy reference.

Illustrations, Lettering, etc.

An illuminated drawing board (mimeoscope) may be used with styli, lettering guides, and screen plates to add illustrations, lettering, and shading to mimeographed copy. When incorporating illustrations, lettering, typing, etc., map out your copy on a layout sheet, place it between the stencil and backing, and use dots of correction fluid at the starting and stopping points of the various items.

Cooperative Statement on Duplicated Material

Publications

The Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the United States Department of Agriculture requires that such cooperation be set forth in all publications or other printed matter issued and used in connection with the work of the Extension Service. The approved cooperative statement reads, "College of Agriculture of the University of

							iculture
Co-operating."	It i	s suggest	ed that	this	be	placed	

Letterheads to Comply with Penalty Mailing Privilege Regulations

In duplicating letters, use the letterhead paper provided; or, if there is reason for using plain paper, include the same statements as they appear on the letterhead paper. This meets requirements that an Extension letterhead be used and that the cooperative statement be included.

Fluid Duplicating

Other Duplicating and Copying Processes

/Include appropriate information on duplicating and copying equipment used in County offices.

Manuscripts for Publication

Requisitions for Duplicating or Printing

/Include State policies and procedures, particularly as they apply to the secretary's responsibilities, e.g., format, number of copies, distribution of copies, submission dates, etc./

NOTE: Consult your duplicator sales representative for brochures and advice on the proper operation and care of your machine and use of accessories.

CHAPTER VI

FILING

Uniform Filing System

The uniform file classification system has been installed in all offices. Each office has a copy of the File Classification Manual.

Disposal List to be Used with Uniform Filing System

Type of Record Retention Requirements

Time of Disposal

¹For those States which have not installed the Uniform Filing System, appropriate information should be incorporated in this chapter.

CHAPTER VII

REPORTS AND RECORDS

Purpose

Monthly Reports

Statistical and Narrative
Due date
Number of copies
Distribution of copies
Forms available

Annual Reports

Statistical and Narrative
Period covered
Due date
Number of copies
Distribution of copies

Report to County Agricultural Committee

Report to County Board of Supervisors

Daily Record

Forms available for use

Long-time Program Plan

Annual review
Adjustments
Maintenance and distribution of copies

Annual Program Plan

Scheduling time for preparation Date for submission Number and distribution of copies

Project Plans

Annual Preparation

Although the actual composition of the narrative report is done by the agent, the secretary should feel responsible for spelling, grammar, composition, arrangement, and following accepted standards of writing. An extra copy of the monthly narrative report can be clipped and organized by headings or projects each month, thus providing the agent with a ready reference for summarizing each project in the annual report. Secretaries can save time for themselves and the agents by keeping accurate and neat daily records of the items used in the compilation of statistical reports.

CHAPTER VIII

EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

Authorization for Travel

In County
Outside County
Outside State
Requests for authorization
Submission date
Number and distribution of copies

Travel Expense Accounts

Preparation Submission date Number and distribution of copies Tax exemption certificate Purpose of travel Maintaining record of Mileage Date and hour of departure and return Allowable reimbursements Hotel Meals Supplies Demonstration materials Other Receipts required Signature

Salary Voucher or Receipt

Instructions for completion
Number and distribution of copies
Summary Sheet
Due date
Affidavits

CHAPTER IX

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Bulletins and Publications

Ordering Procedures
State publications
USDA publications
Free publications
Publications for sale only
"List of Available Publications of the United
States Department of Agriculture"

Other Federal publications
Publications issued by other States
Commercial publications

Distribution Policies
Guides for requests from
Individuals
Groups and organizations
Schools
State and Federal agencies
Companies

Maintaining Inventory

Display

Storage

Filing system

Equipment

Inventory

Annual Schedule

Number and distribution of copies

Maintaining record of purchase and disposal of equipment Purchasing policies and procedures

Funds used

Number and distribution of purchase order form copies

Maintenance and care
Typewriter
Duplicating equipment
Addressograph
Other office machines
Procedure for machine repair

Typewriter Care

Daily

Dust the outside of the typewriter
Dust underneath to keep air circulation from
carrying particles of dirt into the machine
Clean the type with a stiff bristle brush

Weekly

Brush dust from guide rail Clean the platen and feed roll with a soft cloth (lightly dampened with alcohol) Check ribbon to see if replacement is necessary

ALWAYS move carriage to the extreme left or right before making corrections to prevent erasure dust from falling into the typewriter.

Center the carriage and cover the typewriter whenever it is not in use.

Duplicating Equipment Care

Keep the machine free from dust
Use cleaning fluids and oil according to directions
for your particular machine
Keep ink pad in good condition
Use a protective cover over the cylinder when
machine is not in use
Keep impression roller and feed rolls clean
Leave the cylinder in correct position when not
in use
Keep the machine level and away from heat
Store ink away from intense heat or cold
Cover the machine at the end of the day or
whenever it is not in use

Office Supplies

Purchasing policies and procedures
Funds used
Number and distribution of requisition form copies
Maintaining inventory
Storage

Photographic Supplies

Purchasing policies and procedures

Visual Aids and Exhibits

Policies for requisitioning

CHAPTER X

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

Budgets

Sources of funds
Preparation for
County
State
Submission dates
Number and distribution of copies

Financial Records

Petty cash
Safekeeping
Records maintained
Special funds
Banking facilities
Records maintained

Audit

CHAPTER XI

ABBREVIATIONS, NUMERALS, PUNCTUATION, and WORD DIVISION

ABBREVIATIONS

General

Established abbreviations are acceptable in all but the most formal writing. For reading ease, use only well-known abbreviations. If it is desirable to use an abbreviation that may not be familiar to the reader, the abbreviation is followed in parentheses by the spelled-out word or phrase. After this first definition of its meaning, the abbreviation may be used without further explanation.

Capitals, Periods, and Spacing

a. In general, when abbreviating a word or words, capitalize the abbreviation as in the original word or words. Use a period after each element of the abbreviation, unless through usage the period is omitted. Allow no spaces after periods except when they follow the initials in names of persons.

c.o.d. St. a.m. J. M. Jones N.Y.

of government agencies and other organized bodies, if not contrary to usage.

FES USDA ASCS FHA

Addresses

Words in an address are usually spelled out. Where brevity is required, these abbreviations may be used:

St. Street Dr. Drive
Ave. Avenue Ct. Court
Blvd. Boulevard Bldg. Building

Do not abbreviate county, fort, mount, point, and port.

Geographic Terms

a. "United States" may be abbreviated when preceding "Government" or the name of a government organization, except in formal writing.

U.S. Government

U.S. Department of Agriculture

b. It is preferable to spell out Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and the names of States of the United States. However, the following may be used:

Ala.	D.C.	Md.	Nev.	Oreg.	Vt.
Ariz.	Fla.	Mass.	N.H.	Pa.	V.I.
Ark.	Ga.	Mich.	N.J.	P.R.	Va.
Calif.	Ill.	Minn.	N. Mex.	R.I.	Wash.
C.Z.	Ind.	Miss.	N.Y.	S.C.	W. Va.
Colo.	Kans.	Mo.	N.C.	S. Dak.	Wis.
Conn.	Ky.	Mont.	N. Dak.	Tenn.	Wyo.
Del.	La.	Nebr.	Okla.	Tex.	

Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Utah.

Calendar Divisions

It is preferable to spell out the names of months and days of the week. If brevity is required, the following forms are suggested:

Jan. Sun. Feb. Mon. Tues. Mar. Wed. Apr. Thurs. Aug. Fri. Sept. Oct. Sat. Nov. Dec.

Do not abbreviate May, June, and July.

Names and Titles

- a. Use abbreviations in firm names as they are shown on the firm's letterhead.
 - J. Brown & Sons, Inc.

b. Where brevity in company names is required, the following abbreviations may be used:

Co. Company Inc. Incorporated

Corp. Corporation Bro. Brother

c. Do not abbreviate "Corporation" in names of Federal government units.

Commodity Credit Corporation

d. Use the following abbreviations after a name:

Esq. Degrees: M.A. Jr. Ph.D. Sr. LL.D.

Do not use the abbreviation "Esq." and other titles, such as, "Mr., Mrs., and Dr." in combination with another title or with abbreviations indicating academic degrees.

John L. Smith, Esq. not Mr. John L. Smith, Esq. John Jones, A.B., Ph.D. Mr. John Jones, A.B., Ph.D.

NUMERALS

General

Whether to express a number in figures or to spell it out is often a troublesome choice. The following suggestions offer over-all guidance in choosing the best method of expressing a number:

- a. Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence and isolated numbers of less than 10. Use figures for numbers of more than one digit and for numbers in groups.
- b. Use Arabic rather than Roman numerals.
- c. Except in legal documents, avoid repeating in numerals a number which has been spelled out.

Numbers Spelled Out

a. Single numbers of less than 10 within a sentence.

six horses five recommendations

b. Numbers of less than 100 preceding a compound modifier containing a figure.

> two 3/4-inch boards but 120 8-inch boards

Round numbers and indefinite expressions.

a hundred cows a thousand and one reasons less than a million dollars

d. Fractions standing alone or followed by "of a" or "of an."

one-half inch one-half of a farm three-fourths of an inch

e. Ordinal numbers less than 10th.

eighth parallel Second Street

Large Numbers

Large numbers are usually expressed in figures; however, numbers from a million up which end in four or more zeros may be expressed by combining figures and words when used in text.

> \$1,200,390,180 \$12 million

\$1 billion 3.25 million

Numbers Expressed in Figures

a. Single numbers of 10 or more within a sentence.

about 40 men

nearly 10 miles

b. Groups of two or more numbers in a sentence if any one of the numbers is 10 or more.

The man has 3 suits, 2 pairs of shoes, and 12 pairs of socks.

c. Serial numbers.

Bulletin 725 pages 352-357

lines 5 and 6

d. Quantities, measures, and time.

(1)	Ages.	6 years old a 3-year-old boy
(2)	Dates.	June 1965 June 20, 1965 March 5 to April 19, 1965
(3)	Measurements.	8 by 12 inches 2,500 horsepower
(4)	Money.	\$0.75 or 75 cents \$3.64 \$3 per 200 pounds \$3.00 to \$3.65
(5)	Percentages.	23 percent
(6)	Time.	10 o'clock or 10 p.m. 4:30 a.m.

PUNCTUATION

General

Punctuation marks make it easier to read and understand what someone has written. Spacing after punctuation is a detail that marks typing as professional.

Leave:	After:
2 spaces 1 space 1 space no space 1 space 2 spaces 1 space	colons semicolons commas dashes right parenthesis periods (as final marks of punctuation) periods which follow abbreviations and initials periods which represent decimal points exclamation points exclamation points within a sentence question marks question marks within a sentence
1 space	closing quotation marks

No space is left before any of the punctuation marks listed on the previous page except the initial parenthesis and initial quotation marks. Both of these are preceded by one space. No space is left between parentheses and quotation marks and the matter in the parentheses or quotation marks.

Punctuation with Quotation Marks

The comma and the period are always typed before or inside the quotation marks. The semicolon and colon should be typed after the quotation marks. Question or exclamation marks come before or after the quotation marks, depending on the meaning of the text.

Apostrophe

Use the apostrophe:

1. To indicate contractions or omitted letters.

I've it's (it is)

2. To show possession. Add "'s" when the noun does not end with an "s" sound. It is acceptable to either add only the apostrophe or add "'s" to a noun ending in "s." If a word ends in "ss" add only the apostrophe.

Officer's officers' (referring to more than one officer)
Mr. Jones' farm or Mr. Jones's farm hostess'

3. To show possession in compound nouns, add the apostrophe or "'s" to the final word.

brother-in-law's secretary-treasurer's

Do not use the apostrophe to form the possessive of personal pronouns.

theirs yours hers its

Colon

Use the colon:

1. To separate an introductory statement from explanatory or summarizing material that follows.

The board consists of three officials: Chairman, vice chairman, and recorder-secretary.

2. To follow a formal salutation.

Dear Mr. Franklin:

To Whom It May Concern:

3. To separate the hour and the minutes in clock time.

8:15 a.m.

11:59 p.m.

Comma

Use the comma:

1. To separate words or figures that might otherwise be misunderstood or misread.

Instead of hundreds, thousands came. Out of each 20, 10 are rejected.

2. To set off introductory or explanatory words that precede, break, or follow a short direct quotation. The comma is not needed if a question mark or an exclamation point is already part of the quoted matter.

I said, "Don't you understand the question?"
"I understand it," she replied, "but I disagree with the answer."
"Why?" he asked.

3. To indicate the omission of an understood word or words.

Then he was enthusiastic; now, indifferent.

4. To separate a series of modifiers of equal rank.

It is a young, eager, intelligent group.

5. To follow each of the members within a series of three or more, when the last two members are joined by and, or, or nor.

horses, mules, and cattle

by 5, 10, or 20

6. Before and after Jr., Sr., Inc., and academic degrees.

Henry Smith, Jr., Chairman Jones Brothers, Inc.

7. Before and after names of States preceded by names of cities within a sentence.

Washington, D.C., schools

8. To set off parenthetic words, phrases, or clauses.

This bulletin, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will answer many of your questions.

9. To set off words or phrases in apposition or in contrast.

Mr. Smith, the County Agent in Dodge County, attended the meeting.

You will need work, not words.

10. To separate the clauses of a compound sentence if they are joined by a simple conjunction, such as, or, nor, and, or but.

The meeting will be held as scheduled, but the location has been changed to 119 Adams Street.

11. To separate the title of an official and the name of his organization in the absence of the words "of" or "of the."

Dean, College of Agriculture

12. To separate thousands, millions, and so forth, in numbers of four or more digits except street, room, post office box, and telephone numbers.

4,230 50,491 1,000,000 1219 Sinclair Avenue

13. To set off the day of the month from the year; the trend is to omit the comma after the year.

The reported dates of September 11, 1964 to June 12, 1965 were erroneous.

Do not use the comma:

1. To separate the month and year in a date.

production for June 1965

2. To separate two nouns one of which identifies the other.

The bulletin "Plant Disease"

Parentheses

Use parentheses:

1. To set off matter not part of the main statement or not a grammatical element of the sentence, yet important enough to be included.

The result (see figure 2) is most surprising.

2. To enclose letters or numbers designating items in a series either at the beginning of paragraphs or within a paragraph.

Among the uses of the tabulator are (1) placement of the date line, (2) paragraph indentations, and (3) placement of the complimentary close and signature line.

3. To enclose a reference at the end of a sentence.

The specimen exhibits both phases (page 4, chart 1). The form should be completed in detail. (The procedure is described on page 21.)

Period

Use the period:

1. To end declarative and imperative sentences.

He works for Johnson & Sons, Inc. Do not be late.

2. To end an indirect question or a question intended as a suggestion and not requiring an answer.

May we hear from you soon.

3. To indicate omission within a sentence, use three periods with spaces between; at the end of a sentence, four. Use spaced periods on a separate line to show omission of one or more paragraphs.

He called . . . and left He returned the next day.

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks:

1. To enclose a direct quotation. Single quotation marks are used to enclose a quotation within a quotation.

She said, "The dictionary will give you the correct division of the word 'syllable.'"

When a quotation consists of two or more paragraphs, quotation marks should be placed before each paragraph and at the end of the last paragraph.

2. To enclose the titles of:

Articles
Books, chapters, or parts of books
Brochures, pamphlets

Semicolon

Use the semicolon:

1. To separate two related sentences when the comma and conjunction are omitted.

The typewriter is equipped with parentheses; brackets can be typed by using the underscore at top and bottom of the oblique line.

2. To separate clauses that are punctuated by commas.

If you want your writing to be worthwhile, give it unity; if you want it to be easy to read, give it coherence; and, if you want it to be interesting, give it emphasis.

WORD DIVISION

General

Words should be divided only when necessary. When they must be divided, they are separated between syllables. To be sure of the correct syllable structure, consult a dictionary.

Do	not	Divide	Words

At the ends of more than two consecutive lines.

At the end of a page or of a paragraph.

Of one syllable, no matter how long the word may be.

through

best

straight

Of five or fewer letters, even though containing more than one syllable.

every

into

area

Between a one- or a two-letter initial or terminal syllable and the rest of the word.

identity

behavior

period

ammonia

Before a one-vowel syllable within a word.

grati-tude

collabo-rate

Never Divide

The past tense of a short verb.

Dressed

Signed

Figures.

129,284

Amounts of money. Units of measure and figures they describe. \$990,822.22

25 inches

Abbreviations.

p.m.

c.o.d.

These divisions are permissible:

	John A.
Smith	
	1902 South Main
Street	
	Los Angeles,
California	
	March 7,
1965	

Initials may not be separated: J. A. Smith must be typed on one line.

Degrees (Ph.D.), titles (Mr.), and abbreviations (Sr.) should not be separated from a name.

CHAPTER XII

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Regular Office Conference

Purpose

Planning program
Correlating activities of agents
Preparation of calendars
Planning future work
Distribution of workload among secretaries

Attendance

Agents Secretaries

If it is the agent's decision that the secretary attend, her duties include:

Assist in preparation of agenda
Suggest office procedure items for discussion
Check meeting room and supplies
Record decisions and assignments for follow-up
Assist in preparation of summary

County Staff Meetings

Purpose Schedule Committees, groups, individuals, etc.

CHAPTER XIII

AIDS TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Planning and Organizing Secretarial Work

Careful planning of work provides for timely scheduling, consistency in meeting deadlines, and anticipation of emergencies. A well-organized plan can be adjusted more readily to the ever-changing demands of the Extension program.

Simplifying your tasks is a part of planning and organizing. Develop a questioning attitude to determine ways in which you can eliminate details or rearrange the order of a particular job to save time. Analyze the placement of your desk supplies to be sure they are within easy reach. One aid to increased efficiency is orderly procedure in handling papers, decisively settling each matter as it flows across the desk. Many times this calls for the ability to make yourself do a task now instead of postponing it from day to day. Procrastinating duties because you consider them distasteful signifies lack of self-discipline.

As a secretary, you can perform your job with less effort and in less time by applying the steps recommended by work simplification experts. Because something has always been done a certain way does not necessarily mean it should continue to be done that way. However, to find a better way takes a systematic approach. When you have decided a situation needs improvement, break down the job in detail, obtain and evaluate all information about the present method, develop and test new procedures.

Things that need improvement are not always obvious. Jobs that waste time and materials sometimes escape notice unless you look closely. Reviewing each detail of a process as it happens helps you to study it more carefully. Each task is made up of three activities: make ready; do; put away. The do activity is the central and important one, but sometimes the make ready and put away take considerably more time than the actual doing of the task.

Before you start your activities you must make sure of what you are doing. Think through the job to decide how it should be done. For the secretary, understanding why something is done adds meaning

and brings a sense of participation. Setting a specific deadline lets you know when the job must be finished and helps in establishing priorities for other work. Knowing who will be available to do the work is particularly important for the big projects.

The questioning process--What? How? Why? When? Who? Where?-leads to improvement possibilities. Eliminate unnecessary steps,
combine tasks to save time, change the sequence of a job for more
efficient performance, and simplify the remaining elements. Wellplanned methods and procedures are essential in developing an
efficient office with a pleasant atmosphere and the secretary plays
a vital role in creating such an office.

Improving Skills

Typing experts say that common errors are caused by faulty techniques or lack of concentration. Correct position is the first step toward easier as well as faster and more accurate typing. For most secretaries correct height is attained with the typewriter on a surface 28 to 30 inches from the floor. If you have lost some of your typing facility and your speed has slackened its pace, practice typing words containing troublesome letters.

Shorthand skill can be improved by making it a part of your everyday duties. Take messages in shorthand; make notes of unfamiliar or difficult words and practice the correct shorthand outlines. Saving transcription time calls for a few systems. If the dictator hesitates frequently, take dictation in the left-hand column of your notebook and reserve the right-hand side for making changes or corrections. Devise some signals, such as using a colored pencil to emphasize rush items. Allow room at the beginning of each piece of dictation for special instructions about carbon copies, enclosures, and so forth. Review your notes, insert punctuation and grammatical corrections before beginning to transcribe.

Professional Improvement

While skills are basic to the job, a secretary's scope of information needs to be increased by broad knowledge outside of her technical proficiency. The professional secretary of today must read and comprehend pertinent information constantly being written about new developments in business and government. You can turn your daily work into a learning situation by seeking answers to questions and enjoying the purpose of what you do.

The progressive secretary accepts changes in policy quietly and without confusion or resentment because she realizes they result from careful consideration of methods, routine, and acceptability. However, there must be a desire to increase knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes essential to effective job performance. In a number of communities evening courses are offered by public high schools, business schools, colleges, community organizations, and so forth. Your public library is also an excellent source for reading material, such as that listed in the "Suggested References." Taking advantage of all opportunities for self-improvement will enable you to keep growing in competence for your job.

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

- COMPLETE SECRETARY'S HANDBOOK, Lillian Doris and Besse May Miller, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- COUNTY AGENTS DIRECTORY, published annually by C. L. Mast, Jr. and Associates, 2041 Vardon Lane, Flossmoor, Illinois.
- DICTATION DISCS (dictation records), Dictation Disc Company, 170 Broadway, New York 38, New York.
- HOW TO BE A SUPER-SECRETARY, Remington Rand Office Machines Division, Sperry Rand Corporation, Sperry Rand Building, New York 19, New York, 19 pp.
- LETTER PERFECT, Dictaphone Corporation, 730 Third Avenue, New York 17, New York, 70 pp.
- REFERENCE MANUAL FOR STENOGRAPHERS AND TYPISTS, Ruth E. Gavin and Lillian E. Hutchinson, Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42 Street, New York, New York 10036, 188 pp.
- SECRETARIAL SHORTCUTS, IBM Corporation, Educational Services Department, 545 Madison Avenue, New York, New York, 25 pp.
- THE SECRETARY, monthly magazine published by The National Secretaries Association (International), 1103 Grand Avenue, Suite 410, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.
- THE SECRETARY'S WORKSHOP, monthly portfolios on secretarial work, Bureau of Better Business Practice, 24 Rope Ferry Road, Waterford, Connecticut 06385.
- * THE SEVEN KEYS TO BETTER FASTER TYPING, U.S. Civil Service Commission, Personnel Methods Series No. 6, April 1962, 37 pp.

^{*} May be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402.

- STANDARD HANDBOOK FOR SECRETARIES, Lois Hutchinson, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
- TECHNIQUES OF MIMEOGRAPHING, A. B. Dick Company, 5700 West Touhy Avenue, Chicago 48, Illinois, 51 pp.
- TODAY'S SECRETARY, monthly (except July and August) magazine published by Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
- 25 TYPING SHORTCUTS, Remington Rand Office Machines Division, Sperry Rand Corporation, 15 pp.
- 20,000 WORDS, Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
- TYPING POWER DRILLS, Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
- WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY, G. & C. Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts.
- WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY OF THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE, World Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio.
- *WORD DIVISION (Supplement to Government Printing Office Style Manual), 124 pp.

(State)	File Classification manual,	(date)	
(State)	Administrative Handbook,	(date)	

NOTE: In cases where the publisher is mentioned more than once, the address is not repeated.

EXHIBITS

Forms

Duplicating or Printing Requisition Equipment Purchase Order Leave Request Out-of-State Travel Request Resignation (form or sample letter) Supply Requisition Tax Exemption Certificate Telephone Message Travel Expense

Records and Reports

Annual Reports--Narrative and Statistical Daily Record--Office Callers
Daily Record--Telephone Calls
Inventory Schedule
Monthly Reports--Narrative and Statistical
Salary Voucher

Where practicable, include a completed sample of each form, record, or report in the Exhibits section, together with such information as number and distribution of copies and, if applicable, the date on which the item is due.

Letter and News Release

Include examples of a two-page letter and a news release following the style suggested in Chapter IV.

Procedures and Regulations

Travel
Use of Federal Penalty Mailing Privilege by Extension
Employees

